

Pst. Oghenethoja Umuteme MSc MDiv ThD

Fruitful Vine



A Study Devotional



Not for Sale



Spending Time with God

Time	Description	Action
5:00am - 5:30am	Praising His awesomeness in the cool of the morning breeze and Dedicating of the day's activity. You may decide to do it outside to feel the cool morning breeze	Prayer/Praise
9:00am-9:05am	Read a Psalm of praise back to Him. Tell Him what you feel for Him in adoration and total submission	Praise
12:00noon - 12:30pm	It is noontime – half of the workday is gone. Tell Him thank you for allowing you cross over to the other half of the workday. Thank Him for all that transpired while you worked	Prayer/Praise
4:00pm- 4:05pm	Read another Psalms of Praise	Praise
6:00pm - 6:30pm	Thank Him for the day. You are probably now at home. Call the family together or a neighbour and worship Him together	Prayer/Praise
9:00pm - 9:05pm	Read a Psalms of praise after which you should take a rest while reading your bible and meditating	Praise
11:55pm - 12:30am	Thank Him for allowing you to see a new day and take control of the new day	Prayer/Praise

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Unless otherwise indicated, Bible quotations are taken from the King James Version and New King James Version of the Holy Bible. Scripture quotations marked with ESV are taken from the Holy Bible, English Standard Version.

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Address all enquiries to the publisher:

Restoration Media House Limited

+234-8086737791, +2348076190064,

Email: rmhltd.info@gmail.com

Follow Pastor Oghenethoja Umuteme on:



Oghenethoja Umuteme



@PstUmuteme



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Preface

This month of April promises to be more spiritually filled. It is the month we remember the death of our saviour upon the cross of Golgotha for our sins. The topical devotionals for this month are prepared with the mindset of salvation.

Christ received all our burdens, shame and pain to enable us to enter into the kingdom of light. We are no more engrossed with how to overcome our shame, but to recognise the sacrifice of Jesus and the price that heaven paid for our sins. I will encourage you to be steadfast, with a sense of remorse throughout this month. Not to cry and become debased with hopelessness, but to focus on Calvary. That day – the earth shook to end our shame, and to announce our eternal freedom. You see,

by His death, we are admitted into the dining table of the Lord in heaven, to behold His everlasting glory. His glory lives in us, and that is the inner peace that we experience daily. What are you waiting for? It is time to sing your freedom to the ears of the devil. We are free – because whoever the son has set free, is free indeed. Therefore, the structure adopted throughout this April's devotional is centred on encouraging us to seek the spiritual. So, you will come across the word – “spiritual” more often. As always, each topical discourse will feature a brief exegesis or contextual analysis, followed by sound hermeneutics or extensive analysis. As much as possible, inference will be made on life instances or stories, followed by faith confession. We will follow the earlier pattern of saying a short prayer after the faith confession. Some relevant Bible portions for personal meditation have also been provided.

Pastor Oghenethoja Umuteme

**BTech (Mar. Engrg); MSc (Oil & Gas Engrg);
MSc (Organisational Psychology);
MBS (Biblical Studies); MTS (Theological Studies),
MTh (Theology); M.Div. (Divinity);
Th.D. (Theology); PhD (Engrg – in view)**

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Laying Hold on Eternal Life

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. 1 Tim. 6:12



The anchor verse says specifically that the duty of care placed upon every Christian, is to lay hold on eternal life. We must be careful in defining what the anchor verse says. We lay hold on, not lay hold of. To lay hold “of” something, is to possess it, while to lay hold “on” is to stamp yourself upon it. Meaning, eternal life requires some effort from us. Also, the use of “on,” means that we must be mindful of eternal life, no matter how busy we have become with the things of the world. We lay hold on what we are knowledgeable of. To lay hold on eternal life, is to profess with all certainty, the detail and hidden information surrounding eternal life. Those who lay hold on eternal life, are those who are deep in their spiritual quest in the Lord. Essentially, this is the month of Easter. It is a month specially set apart to remember the death of Jesus Christ; a time to think about our walk with the Lord, and to know if we are faithful to the service He called us in to. The reason is to enable us to receive a crown of Glory in the Realm of the Kingdom of Light. Christ made reference to the glory of His kingdom severally while on earth, so that His disciples would have a better perspective of heaven and desire to be with Him (John 14:3). He mentioned the mansion in heaven – and a mansion is a very large expensive house. Yet, this is what the Lord is promising you and I. Isn't it wonderful to have a God

who cares about our souls beyond this material world? Eternal life is abundant life (John 10:10). It is a life of no denials, as we become covered with the wings of the sun of righteousness (Mal. 4:2). On earth, we can have a feeling of what the glory of heaven is like when the Lord manifests in us – people respond to help us, and unbelievers depend on us to survive (Isaiah 60:12). This is one clear reason why unbelievers will not allow you to serve the Lord with your might. It is the reason there is so much attack on Christian values all over the world. Are you going to allow them to take away your rights in the Lord? I don't think so. Spend time with the Lord, and your victory will be established.

Faith confession: I understand that eternal life is not a “wish” but a reward for faithful service in His vineyard. Therefore, I am determined to live a life that will please the Lord.

Let us pray: My Lord and God, following your precepts is not what I do with my human understanding. I yield to your control and desire for me. Help me to please you always. Amen!

Meditation: Psalms 78:34-37; Hebrews 5:12-14

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Keeping the Fire of Your Salvation Burning

This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly; that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men – Titus 3:8



Until we are ready to maintain and sustain our good works in Him, can we live a life filled and cast in the anointing of His glory. Some Believers become angry when they are told that they need to maintain good works in Christ. They claim they need not do anything anymore – no support for crusades or for church evangelical drive, no need to support the building of the House for God, etc. The excuse they give is that the finished work of Christ at Calvary is sufficient and able to keep them in Christ. I will say that while they do have a base for their belief, there is however, a whole lot of holes in what they profess. If we are to sleep, because the work of faith is completed and forgotten, then Jesus wouldn't tell Peter that Satan can still abuse his faith (Luke 22:31; John 21:18), and Jesus wouldn't have requested that Peter should care for His flock (John 21:17). When the Lord lives in us, we carry His glory wherever we go, to enable us to do His work. He becomes our dwelling place (Psa. 90:1), a strong tower (Psa. 61:3), and a very present help in time of need (Psa. 46:1). But, for Him to live in us we must bear His personality. In Mark 10:29-30, we are told that our work with the Lord shall be rewarded; here on earth and in heaven. Equally, Hebrews 11:6 says that the Lord rewards only those who seek Him with all their hearts. People often decry the fact that they have repented and yet do

not see the hand of the Lord in their lives. It is true that the moment many of us gave our lives, we indeed received some miracles – no denying this fact. It is like welcoming a visitor into your house the first time – you quickly get him/her water to bath, food to eat, and dresses the bed he/she would lay. If he/she stays more with you, say for weeks, you would discover that you no longer try to help your visitor – it is your expectation that he/she should help out with the works in the house, and his/her failure to do these will earn a sad look from your face. God wants you to work in His vineyard – this is how you keep the fire of salvation burning. The master will only reward whoever He meets working in His vineyard.

Faith confession: Why it is hard to believe that I need to still work out my salvation with fear and trembling, it is a fact that defines my loyalty to the purpose of God.

Let us pray: Lord – help me to realise where I am failing in your work. Help my heart to understand your need in my life. Instruct my soul to observe your commands daily. Reach out to my spirit to yield to your instructions. Amen!

Meditation: Matthew 25:1-13; 1 Timothy 5:24-25

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Perfecting His Glory in us

*For all have sinned, and come short
of the glory of God. Romans 3:23*



The book of Romans 3:23 opens a mystery about why humans are suffering on earth. It reminds us that all sinners have “come short of the glory of God.” What does this mean? It means we have been denied access to God, and all the goodness that comes from Him to us. In Matthew 5:48, Christ informed His disciples and by extension, all of us, that we must be as perfect as God the Father, who forgives us when we approach Him with a contrite heart. When we worship God in Spirit and in Truth, we end up edifying the Church of God, and allowing the light of God from heaven to fall on His children. When this happens, a part of that light will penetrate inside of us, giving us the strength to carry on with our daily life and serving God in sanctity. Then a part will be reflected – manifesting the Glory of God we bear inside to the outside world (Matthew 5:16). If we must perfect the glory of God in us, then we must submit ourselves unto the control of God, and allowing Him to create a new heart in us and renewing His steadfast spirit within us (Psalms 51:10). God frowns at unrepentance in Ezekiel 44:7,9. Here, He warned that Strangers (those who have no perfect knowledge of God – Hosea 4:6); Uncircumcised in Heart (those still living a double life and not ready to pursue God, who are today with God, tomorrow with the devil - Hosea 6:1-3); and

Uncircumcised in Flesh (those living the life explained in Mark 7:21-23), should not officiate in His Sanctuary. Can we say this of pastors, ushers and choirs today? Have we not turned the house of God into a night club? The reason for this warning is to enable us to desire His Glory, and live to earn it even while on earth. Many would argue that their outward lives do not matter, because God only sees their heart. This is not true, because the glory of God cannot be hidden. Once the inside is transformed, the outside will automatically reflect what is inside. We must not forget that, “by their Fruit,” – Matthew 7:20, we shall know those who have the Glory of God within.

Faith confession: My life is made beautiful in your glory. I am made perfect in your glory. My life is a testimony of your mercy. Truly, I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Let us pray: Lord! Help me to perfect your glory within me through my outward life. Let me showcase the beauty of your glory in my spiritual life. Take your place in my heart. Bath me with your purifying dew and help my spirit to seek you always. Amen!

Meditation: Matthew 5:13-16;
Psalms 71:5-9

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A Call to Return and Live

*Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?
saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from
his ways, and live? Ezekiel 18:23*



There is a burden in heavenly places. The burden of passion that all that God created should return to Him. Sometimes, I wonder why God so much cares about us, even with all our atrocities against His creation and precious name. Come to think of it, has He not made this call severally and mankind still continue as though there is none that can challenge them? Has there not been instances when we realise we need God and sooner than we get His pity, that we return to our unholy ways of life? What is missing? Why is it difficult for mankind to sustain Faith in God? The book of John 1:8, opens up with a clue – on our passage from light to life, “That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” It is important that we should know that prior to the day we were born, we were covered in the glory of His light. That light renews our conviction to serve the Lord. It is that light that tells us we have wronged the Lord. Yet, just as the light of the candle can go out in a wind, so also the challenges of life can put off our individual lights. It is when this happens that we lost the consciousness of the divine in us, that we were born with. When

the light is in us, our angels stand before the Lord. When this light quenches because of sin, our angels have no face to stand before the Lord. There are clues, enabling us to know that the entire Bible and what we would see as the will of God is to ensure that we live here on earth, to be able to tender God's garden. Heaven is our ultimate pension plan. Just as those who don't have a good pension plan suffers looking for means to live when they are old, so also those who depart this earth would have no resting place when they did not do the will of God.

Faith confession: Lord! I can hear your voice calling my soul to return and serve you wholeheartedly. Draw me closer by your infinite mercy. Hold me closer than before.

Let us pray: My Lord, My God, I pray that you have pity on my poor soul. Help my heart to keep yearning for you and to confess you daily. Restore your joy in me continually. Amen!

Meditation: Isa. 64:8-9;1 Peter 4:1-2; Psalms 56:1-13

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His Personality in Our Situation

...Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.? Daniel 3:25



He was present in their situation. He unbound them and set them free, even in the midst of the fire. You see, as a child of God, even when you are not out of the situation that hold you bound, be rest assured that the grace of the Lord will enable you have that inner peace and rest. While Joseph was still in prison, he never suffered like his fellow prisoners. There is hunger everywhere, as we can see, yet the children of God will have plenty to eat. Before the Lord showed up in the anchor verse above, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were so certain that their God will deliver them, "our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace..." – Dan. 3:17. I saw a lady some time ago, who had her car damaged by an accident. When I offered to assist her, she thanked me and said that her husband was on his way. You see, she was certain her husband will surely come to her aid. I was scared, because it was getting dark and the road was getting lonely, yet her faith made me to leave her. If you have a relationship with the Father in heaven through Christ, you are very sure that no matter how threatening the situation might be, you are coming out as a victor. Who is your God? Why do you come to serve and worship? These and many more questions must be answered before we would be able to function as the church of Christ here on earth. In most cases, we have sliced God into parts as we do to meats or the bread we eat.

We have reduced the personality of God to what we perceive Him to have done in our lives. When we need provision and we received after prayers, we call Him Jireh. When we want to fight war, we call Him El Shaddai – the Almighty God. When we need healing, we call Him Rapha. Is this actually how God wants to be known? When He revealed Himself to Moses, He calls Himself "I am that I am"; which means He is ever present in our will, thoughts and truths. Jesus told Pilate that those who hears the truth hears God. Can we say that we live in truth? The Lord spoke to me some time ago, "When people gather in multitude, have they gathered because of me?" This will be affirmed by the several reasons why many throngs to the building we call church every Sunday.

Faith confession: Lord – Jesus! I know that you are always in my situation. Though, I might not have realised this early, I can say for sure that you have unbound me and released me from all my pains.

Let us pray: Ever Faithful Lord and God, You are the cloud over my destiny. Your dew pours over my soul and nourishes her in your wisdom. Help my spirit to be conscious of You always. Amen!

Meditation: Daniel 11:32; Psalms 33:11-12; Luke 19:1-27

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Onward to Spirituality

*Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which
he commanded to a thousand generations. I Chronicles 16:15*



The anchor verse above says categorically, that it is important that we should be mindful of his covenant. Two words come out from the anchor verse above – “mindful” and “covenant.” We will now take a look at them one after the other. To be mindful as used above, is to respect and set apart. A covenant, as used above indicates an agreement with an aim. If one reads further down to verse 16, one will see that the Chronicler referred to the covenant God made with Abraham. For us, we are equally in a covenant with God through Jesus Christ, who obtained mercy for us by His own blood. Covenants are reactivated through the spilling of blood upon the altar. This is why our relationship with God is centred on the sacrifice of Christ, without which there is no propitiation. We must realise that the problem with many of us is the fact that we already have a wrong perception about God. We only see His relevance at the point of our needs, as many have come to see the church's responsibility as wholly that of welfare. This has made it difficult for us to grow and walk the path of perfection which brings the ultimate presence of God to us. It is God's intention that we learn of Him daily and do the things He does, so that we can fully represent Him here on Earth. Here, scriptures like Hebrews 5:11, come to mind -

"Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing." Meaning, Saint Paul could not reveal Divinity to them, because they are not matured to receive it. Again, Jesus says in John 16:12, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." Jesus wanted to reveal Divinity to them, but He couldn't. And when Jesus was with Nicodemus, He said, in John 3:12- "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?" Here also, Jesus could not reveal Divinity to Nicodemus. We need to exemplify the life in Heaven here on earth. God is a Spirit, the Angels are spirits, and the Holy Spirit has been given to us so that we can go spiritual.

Faith confession: I am convinced that I am a child of God by the revelation of God in my heart, through Jesus Christ. I am sure, I will grow continually in this revelation daily.

Let us pray: Lord – Jesus! Let the meditation of my heart, be acceptable before you. My heart shall continually glory in your sacrifice at Calvary. Let me reflect upon you always. Amen!

Meditation: John 4:23-24; Matthew 7:13-14; John 6:56-66; Matthew 11:27

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Overcoming Spiritual Bondage

Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Galatians 4:7



It is important that we read the entire Galatians 4, with all enthusiasm. Why? It is because the truth in Christ is vividly revealed here. To understand what this scripture portion advocates, we need to understand Jesus' statement to Philip in John 14:10, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." The above statement casts a shadow upon Paul's position in Galatians 4. As it is with some believers today, Paul attacked the high level of unbelief found among the early Christians in Galatia. They were in bondage, as they were still tied to their customs and traditions of dependent on what he referred to as weak and beggarly elements – Gal. 4:9. Thus, they were rather being chastised by the laws of man (Mat. 15:9), rather than being freed to enjoy the mercies of God in Christ. We have seen such in our time, as many so-called ministers of God, have no clue of what the gospel represents as seen in the anchor verse, and have manipulated their congregations into series of unending fasting and "assignments." Sometimes, I wonder how humans can become so gullible to deceit, when the Bible is available for all to study. The church is now turned into an entertainment, comedy-laden and feasting gathering. The demand of spiritual growth is no longer emphasised. To this, Paul told the

Galatians – "I am afraid of you..." – Gal. 4:11. Why? It is because they have deviated from the truth, which he preached to them. Brethren, we must avoid anyone who has deviated from the truth in Christ, including our pastors. If Paul was afraid of such persons, why can't we keep them at arm's length too? Even, now, with Christian's pilgrimage journey to Israel, many are beginning to intermarry Christianity with Judaism. One can equally see a blend of Christianity and the practice of African religion and Hinduism in the "assignments" that Christians now observe in various churches. The pastors and prophets/prophetesses who does this, latches on the ignorance of their congregations, because of their non-readiness to hear sound doctrine.

Faith confession: I am convinced that I need to grow in the knowledge of Him that created me. My understanding of His ways will equally make me understand His will for me.

Let us pray: Lord! Guide my heart daily to meditate upon your ways. Help me to understand the reason I am here on earth. Let me continually confess you wherever I go. Amen!

Meditation: 1 Peter 2:1-2; Luke 8:5-15

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Becoming Healed

... These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. Ezekiel 47:8



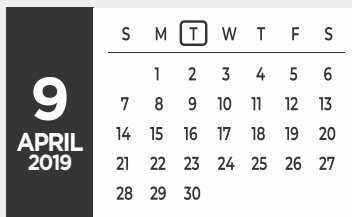
When we talk of healing, many begin to think it is only those who are sick of an ailment that needs healing. This is often noticed during healing services or crusades. Yet, healing is beyond ailments. When God heals, our entire being is restored – physically and spiritually. We are favoured by earth and heaven. Men responds to our needs. We blossom and multiply in fruitfulness. Now, let's take a deep and focused look into the book of Ezekiel 47:1-12. Here, we read about a vision received by Prophet Ezekiel. It was a time when the children of Israel were in captive. They had offended God to the extent that He had to give them away to their captors who devoured their land. In the vision, Ezekiel was taken through different depths of water, until he couldn't move further except to swim, and had to be returned to the bank of the river. The river flowed through difficult terrains tracing the sea – and the moment it flowed into the sea, it was healed. The water being healed will provide means of livelihood for fishermen, and the trees on the banks will equally grow. With trees for building construction, the society will grow into a city. In verse 11, we were told – “But the miry places thereof and the marishes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt.” Hence, the entire river did not get the healing. This said, I will want us to draw

inferences from this scripture portion. The river path through the desert and into the sea is likened to the crooked path we walk in life. If our path is not connected to where our healing would come, we will hardly make success. God promised to lead us through straight paths – Isaiah 42:16. We should also not forget that God connects us to himself to heal us so that we can become fruitful in all that we do. He equally, want us to stay on what He approved for us, else we will not be healed, and filled with power, love and sound mind.

Faith confession: Lord! I am willing to remain where you want me to be. I also understand that it is your desire to heal me – physically and spiritually, provided I am willing to do your bidding and be committed to you. The more I know the Lord, the more He gives me a sound mind.

Let us pray: O! Lord, I pray that you invade my heart with your healing. Help me to respond to your calling daily. Let me be focused on the path of sanctity and to do those things that will help manifest your presence and anointing in my life. Amen!

Meditation: James 4:1-3, 7-8; 2 Corinthians 8:9; 2 Timothy 1:7



Confirmed for the Crown

*...for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life,
which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. James 1:12*



Our trust in the Lord is built on our confession of Him. We declare what we believe by the evidence that live in and with us—Matt. 7:16. The path to life is made up of principles that we must attend to. One must be determined to endure the slow tick of the clock to navigate through. Hence, Apostle James declared by evidence in the anchor verse above that only those who are able to overcome the trials that tends to deter them from succeeding that are worthy to wear a crown of life. What does this imply? It means that success is not achieved on the surface. It is for those who can deep-dive to the bottom of the sea and stay there looking for precious jewels before coming to the surface. This is patience at work. In life, those who are recognised for honour and promotion, are those who are confirmed qualified through series of tests. We write exams in schools. We go through job interviews. We compete in sports. These and many more we do to become recognised and honoured. Are you afraid of competing? Do you easily believe that voice speaking “failure” into your mind? You have started a business that is not really looking too good as expected. You are married, but your expectations are not coming forth. You are in school but becoming discouraged to continue. You are a Christian, but the events of life are threatening you to drop your faith. You are on leadership role, but you are

getting discouraged and not willing to stay on the position. What you are experiencing is a demanding phase of your endeavour. There is a deficiency that the trail is revolving on. You may want to see a counsellor, a trainer in the specific area of deficiency, a pastor for spiritual support and guidance, etc. In all, your inner focus on what you really want in life is very important. Do not be limited by what you see or can imagine. Expand your reasoning, be open to veritable opportunities. Discuss with meaningful people. Address your own unhealthy attitudes. Lay your problems before the table of the Lord. Shalom!

Faith confession: Lord! I am aware that the more I depend and trust in you, the more you will bless the labour of my hand and make it easy for me to succeed in life. I am convinced that my ability to overcome trials in life can enable me to live a life that will please you.

Let us pray: My Lord and God, help my poor spirit to seek you unto perfection daily. I might have made mistakes because I failed you when I was tempted. But, strengthen me to stay firm in you, and to be able to endure temptations that threatens my faith in you. Amen!

Meditation: Romans 12:21; Psalms 45:7-8; Psalms 96:8-12

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Restoring the Spiritual in Us

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Rom. 8:9



How fast and how well we progress in life is dependent on the discovery of the secrets of life as released from the spiritual. The anchor verse above emphasised the "Spirit of Christ." This is the purpose of the new covenant. Its intention is to restore the spiritual in us. By this, we were supposed to act as dictated by God alone, and not by mental or human reasoning. Without the spirit of Christ in us, we are nowhere near salvation. The spirit of Christ in us echoes the will of God in our heart all the days of our lives on earth – Gal. 4:6. Before God breathed into Adam, he was lifeless in the spiritual sense. Hence, the command not to eat the fruit was to ensure they can keep retaining the link to the spiritual. The penalty was that man would die if the fruit of the tree of good and evil was eating, because the fruit would defile the knowledge of God in man, and man would live a life of contemplating the spiritual, rather than acting on the instructions of the spiritual. This is why today we contemplate God's instructions because we do not know if he is the one really speaking. The more we are not sure of His voice, the more we will be running to the wrong person or god, as it happened to Samuel. Jesus started by pointed us to the source of the instruction we need to live, and that we are not supposed to be led by human wisdom, when He said, "our father, who art in heaven..." – Mat 6:9. When we lost our mobile phones' SIM, we often

apply to get a welcome pack before it is reallocated. The same can be applied to our link to the spiritual. Just like we need to keep recharging our lines with credit and using it to make calls, so we ought to keep our communication with the spiritual active, else we will lose connectivity. Our relevance in the spiritual is by use; how much of heavenly instructions did we actually received and put to practice – Heb. 5:14, "...strong meat belongeth to ... those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." The instructions of God are for us so that we can discern the Truth from the multitudes of information that come our way daily.

Faith confession: Lord! I am encouraged to perfect my communication through prayers and meditation with the Lord. I understand that my link with the spiritual is based on how well I can communicate spiritual information in a spiritually minded manner.

Let us pray: Lord! Help me to learn how to communicate with you in the language of heaven. Teach me the ways of the spiritual and let my thoughts be filled with the voice of heaven. Amen!

Meditation: Deut. 9:9-11; Deut. 29:29; Psalms 92:8-11

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Living Beyond Fear

*I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people,
that have set themselves against me round about. Psalms 3:6*



As a Christian, one of the ways of overcoming fear is becoming aware of the power of God in you and what that power can do. We either accept fear and become defeated by what fear presents before us, or we reject it and overcome whatsoever is behind the fear. In the anchor verse above, King David boldly declared that he is not afraid of “ten thousands of people” trying to intimidate him. His boldness to confront his fears is as a result of his understanding of what God can do in his life. See what he said in verse 7, “Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.” Why was David so confident that God will fight his battle, if not for his growing relationship with God. What we don’t give attention to can never become a part of us. What we see as important is what takes the centre stage of our thought process. We can achieve this kind of relationship when we continually live with a spiritual mind-set. Mind-set refers to: Attitude, belief, frame of mind, outlook, mentality, approach, etc. How we approach issues on earth depends on the mind-set we have and how we see issues to have played out for others. What we see as the works of salvation in our lives have a lot to do with how we understand the spiritual realm and the purpose of God in our lives. Hence, to live with the consciousness of God, we should be more concerned about Jesus and what He achieved for us at Calvary than the worldly

challenges we experience—1 Cor. 2:2. In John 1:51 – Jesus says that the heaven shall open, and we will see Him. How many of us have attained this level of spirituality? Will you still be afraid when you can see Him seated at the right hand of the father in heaven? Is this not the reason we say our redeemer lives? So, instead of searching for miracles from one place to the other, why don’t we pray to continually experience this open heaven in our life time. If someone comes to tell us that we have a father somewhere in the world, we would certainly desire to visit someday. How many of us desire to see beyond the visible cloud, to have a vision of heaven? Have you seen Jesus before? What is the proof of your relationship with Him? The world cannot see Him, but we can as fruitful vines in His vineyard - John 14:19.

Faith confession: Lord! I understand that fear is created by the evil one to make me become unstable in faith. When I live in fear, I am giving room for the devil’s temptation.

Let us pray: Dear Lord! help me to recognise the peace you have planted in my heart. Help me to recognise the unconquerable faith that you have planted inside of me. Help me to live beyond fear all the days of my life and speak faith in every situation I found myself. Amen!

Meditation: Deut. 1:28-36; Jer. 17:7-8; Rom. 10:5-11

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Spirits of the Underworld

*That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven,
and things in earth, and things under the earth. Philippians 2:10*



In the anchor verse, the underworld is a place of the things under the earth. Scripture made references to it when it says in Revelations 20:3, that Satan was cast into the “Bottomless Pit.” The bottomless pit is the underworld. This is also the place Jesus referred to as darkness in His teaching of the punishment for the unprofitable servant – Luke 25:30, “And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness.” The underworld is not the grave, as spirits don’t live in graves. It is a home of spiritual confinement for unfaithful souls. If we look closely into Rev. 20:2-3, we will notice that the place is already in existence, and not that God was going to create it. This is the home of familiar spirits that are conjured by the occult world and the prophets of the devil, to derail mankind through their visions of falsity from the path of Holiness, Righteousness and Truth. With these spirits in operation, mankind will continually disobey God and do the things that offends Him. The underworld harbours the spirits of fornication, adultery, seduction, stealing, lies, immoral dressings, pride, etc. The Bible refers to these spirits in the following way: “Haughty spirit” – Prov. 16:18; “Spirit of the world” – 1 Cor. 2:12. In the beginning, the world was without form until God’s presence turned a portion of that world into light. Then

He formed Adam and kept him in His garden, yet, it wasn’t long before the forces of evil located him, and through subtle temptation, he lost all that God had given him. We live in a plane on earth. Above this plane is heaven, and below this plan is abyss which leads to the underworld or hell. It is the den of destruction. Departed souls who did not die in Christ are also locked up there. Christ released the faithful ones who were locked up there when He went there. Unbelievers have their souls chained there - Isaiah 42:22. The Bible made us to know that war broke out in heaven, and since then, the one-third of the angels that followed Satan, are among these spirits trying to upturn the foundation of the world which Christ had laid from the beginning. The name of Jesus can set us free from their influence.

Faith confession: I understand that anyone who do not follow the will of God in Christ, is destined for everlasting torture from the spirits in the underworld.

Let us pray: Dear Lord! Deliver me from the spirits of the underworld. Save my soul from the manipulation of the occult. Help me to stand in your grace continually. Amen!

Meditation: Romans 8:1-39

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Understanding Occult Manipulations

*And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge,
God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things
which are not convenient. Romans 1:28*



It is important to understand that those who patronize the underworld are busy trying to manipulate our consciousness, by invading our mind with the knowledge of this material world. While it is not a wrong idea learning about our material environment, it is unhealthy for a Christian to undermine his or her spiritual place in Christ by clinging to philosophies emanating from human debates of whether there is God or not, or whether Christ died for our sins or not. These are all unholy discourses that are termed evil communications in the Bible. Now, there are some sets of people who argues that they have hidden knowledge or occult knowledge that can make one become spiritually enlightened, rather than following Christ. They are in charge of the politics and economics of this world. Their aim is to abuse your faith with human wisdom or occult science. As pointed out in the anchor verse above, these people are not interested in retaining the knowledge of God in their heart. They have a worldly proof to counter the move and wonders of God. They have tried to disproof the parting of the red sea, and of the plagues of Moses in Egypt. They have tried to debate the books in the Bible. They have argued that Jesus was no other but a master like every other of their masters. Yet the more they argue, the more they plunge this world into contemporary discourse of the abuse of faith in God. Today, we are faced with same-sex marriage, doctrines of immorality, hatred,

wanton killings, vote for abortions, etc. Where is the world heading? Didn't God warned the children of Israel in Deut. 18:9-13, to avoid the occult practices of the Canaanites – divinations, casting of spells, magic, palms reading, etc? Without understanding that these are occult manipulations, we will not understand what the death of Christ on the cross of Calvary have achieved for us. There is no way we would discuss the underworld and their negative influence on the children of God without talking about one of their means of operation and deception; Occultism. Occultism survives on deception and lies, and rejection of the teachings of Jesus Christ, especially the belief in equality of everyone before God, which the Bible preaches. Occult knowledge makes you feel that God is wicked, and as such has deliberately restricted mankind from enjoying the good things of the world. Take caution - do not follow their lies!

Faith confession: As a Christian, it is a demand upon me to fill my heart with the knowledge of God daily by studying His word and meditate upon His personality.

Let us pray: Lord! Help me to retain you in my knowledge. Let me live to do the things that enhances your glory in me. Save me from occult wisdom and knowledge. Amen!

Meditation: 1 Cor. 15:33-34; Rom. 1:28-32;

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Spiritual Effects of Immorality

Do not prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a whore; lest the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full of wickedness. Leviticus 19:29



God frowns at prostitution. Any land that encourages prostitution can never be free from wickedness. If we break down the above scripture verse, we can see that prostitution is possible when parents do not take proper care of their daughters, and when they encourage them to sleep around with men to bring them money. Recent stories around the world is that of male and female cohabitants without any form of marriage agreement entered into. Many see this as modernity, but it can give room to fornication and adultery. The Bible tells us severally that one of the influences of the spirits of the underworld on humans is often manifested in immorality. A look at the events that led to God destroying the earth or some cities in the world, or allowing the children of Israel to be taken into captive severally, or God allowing some lands to be plundered and turned into desolate grounds would send a message of what God detests. Whatever contradicts the character of God is Immorality. Immorality can be said to be – Corruption, sin, wantonness, shamelessness, hardheartedness, pitilessness, wickedness, debauchery, decadence, profligacy, libertinism, licentiousness, iniquitousness, etc. These synonyms help us to drive home the extent of what immorality entails. It is a display of unrighteousness. The opposite of immorality is uprightness. How did this heinous character get into the life of God's

children? All fingers would point to the spirits of destruction – the manifestation of the power of death through the underworld. The warning from God above shows that wickedness is connected with immorality. Is this not true even in our world today? How about those in Government? Have we not heard of how our law makers shop around for prostitutes to spend nights with in hotels? How can such legislators be sane to make laws that will lead to good governance? The increasing wickedness in the land is not unconnected with immorality. Show me a land filled with immorality and I will show you a land that will not experience the Peace and Glory of God. Show me a church where there are immoral dressings and I will show you a church without God. Though, we have lived in immorality in the past, may we not return to it again. Amen!

Faith confession: I know that sexual sin is an abomination to the name of the Lord. I will continually encourage my heart to desist from any act of immoral sex.

Let us pray: Lord! Save me from the spirit of immorality. Help me to overcome seduction. Take my heart away from appreciating immoral dressing. Help me to preach against immorality. Amen!

Meditation: Gal. 5:19; Col. 3:5; 1 Thess. 4:3; Jude 1:7; Isa. 3:16-24

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Overcoming Idolatry

*Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry:
I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. 1 Cor. 10:14-15*



Saint Paul knew the implications of idolatry, when he warned the believers in the city of ancient Corinth to flee from idolatry, as indicated in the anchor verse above. The repercussion is death—physically and spiritually. God detest idolatry. He really does, and anyone who calls upon His name must also run away from any form of idolatry. God detest idolatry because it takes ownership of our souls away from Him and end up making us to incur His wrath and curses. Idol worship makes us look like fools before God. It mutilates the image and right-thinking nature of God in us. God was angry with the ancient world severally because they did not revere Him as the only true God. When God called Abraham, he was separated from his own people who worshipped idols, and taken to a land – though, filled with idolatry worship, but God decided to drive the Canaanites out for Abraham's descendants to possess the Land. When the Children of Israel were finally rescued from Egypt, God conveyed a message that speaks of His heart desire, in Exodus 20:3,5 - “Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God...” When the Devil came to tempt Jesus in Matthew 4, it was his ultimate wish to see Jesus bowing down to him -Mat 4:9. The devil is the master controller general of the underworld and so his deceitful means

on human beings is to show images to people in their dreams and also help them to remember these dreams, puts a desire to carve the images people see, and turning them into gods which they would eventually bow down to. Our wealth can equally become idols if we neglect the service of God to pursue riches. The ornaments we wear can also become idols, if without them we are not willing to serve God. Excessive waste of time and money on travels for sight-seeing can become an idol. Whatever takes our attention from God is an idol. Idolatry makes us to rob God, as it happened in the wilderness where the Israelites gave part of the Gold that would have been used for the tabernacle for the crafting of the golden calf – Exo. 32:3-4.

Faith confession: I know that idolatry steers the jealousy of God, and His jealousy can lead to unpredictable consequences. God want me to love Him with everything in me.

Let us pray: Dear Lord! help me to yield my heart continually unto your precepts. Teach me to diligently preserve your statutes in my mind. Let my soul be strengthen always to remain faithful to your instructions. Amen!

Meditation: 1 Sam. 15:23; Luke 16:13; Deut. 6:5; Deut. 11:1; Jer. 5:7-9

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Deliverance from the Underworld

And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. 1 Kings 18:21



The reason many are unable to become free from the manipulations of the underworld, is because they find it hard to follow the Lord. The anchor verse above refers to a situation where the Israelites were not sure whether to serve the Lord or not. Just as Elijah later challenged the prophets of Baal to a context, so also in spiritual deliverance, ministers of God come against the spirits of the underworld manifesting in the lives of Christians with the word of His anointed. Indecision to follow the Lord is responsible for all the spiritual manipulations that happen to Christians. When we refer to the spirit of the underworld, we mean living with the mindset of evil and wickedness, and the defilement of the image and likeness of God in us. Any behaviour that attracts the anger of God is a manifestation of the spirits of the underworld. Through the past topics on this subject, we now have full knowledge of what the underworld is all about. Jesus has given us power to overcome their manipulations. So, today we shall be taking that authority and standing against their afflictions upon our body, soul and mind. Life is full of secrets, but the ones released unto us are meant to help us overcome the powers of the underworld – to help liberate us from their shackles – Deut. 29:29. Today, you will look into your destiny and challenge every dark situation you notice in your life with the word

of God. Intercept that obstacle today. You cannot wait until the war envelops you before resisting the enemy. Look into the mirror and speak to yourself – “I shall overcome in the name of the Lord; I am liberated from the shackles and chains of the devil.” Put your left hand on your chest and decree goodness upon your life. Say, “I am a child of destiny; I am a blessing to my generation; I am destined to succeed; I am liberated to soar like the eagles; I am a victor; I am purified and sanctified to make exploits; I can never be intimidated; The blood of atonement at Golgotha is speaking on my behalf- to give me peace, joy, good health and prosperity.”

Faith confession: My Lord – My God, I may have lived in doubt – of your word and power. I may have surrounded myself with lies and filled my thoughts with deceits. Today I repent of all, and I surrender my entire being under your control and use.

Let us pray: My God, help my doubting spirit to trust in you I pray thee. Help my soul to continually acknowledge you in my situation and let me not be clouded with spiritual deceit. Let me not be enslaved in the cobweb of spiritual indecision. Save my fragile soul from dying. Amen!

Meditation: John 3:16-21; Psalms 140:1-13

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Building Heavenly Relationships

*For first of all, when ye come together in the church,
I hear that there be divisions among you ...1 Cor. 11:18*



There is no way we can serve the Lord in unity when we are divided. Today, all we see is manifold divisions in doctrine and beliefs. If we exist to glorify the same body of Christ, why the division? As indicated in the anchor verse above, it is not enough that we come together as a body to glorify God, but when we disagree, such union is destroyed. It is a shame to see that there are envies and strives in the house of God. Marriages are being torn apart by misunderstandings resulting from faulty communications. Our actions as Christians have left holes of doubts in the minds of unbelievers, if truly our God is a God of peace, when right from our homes there are discords and hates. The Kingdom of God is set in place in the Order of Melchizedek, which makes it a priestly kingdom. Why do we build relationships? Why do we get attached to some people to the extent we are willing to die to defend their beliefs? It is because of the attachment relationship brings; it takes the whole of our emotions to the extent we are willing to relinquish control to whoever we are building a relationship with. I have learnt over the years that what God is really interested in is how we can build a relationship with Him through our neighbours. We are given a standard in the Bible of what we should do when we are trying to build a relationship with God – we must love Him with our hearts, mind and soul. Our growth and maturity in the Christian faith is hinged on how well we build

this heavenly kingdom relationship – nurturing our feelings for the things of God; seeking to mature the anointing we bear of Him; dedicating time for Him; and being secluded from the world in order to appreciate Him. How can these happen? It all boils down to the basic facts of receiving instructions, working them out and abiding within the tenets of the kingdom. In our devotional today, our focus would be on knowing God. If we have the knowledge of God, we will know how to build relationship of trust, mutual dependence, sincerity, respect, and acknowledgement in the church, that we may glorify Him together. God hates discord, and He is gathering us together under the shadow of His mighty wings, so that we can learn of Him and become united to champion the course of salvation.

Faith confession: Lord! I understand that in unity is the bond of your covenant made strong. I know that you hate disagreements among the brethren and want us to be united in your purpose.

Let us pray: I pray thee o Lord! let your peace reign among your children. Help us dear lord, to live together in unity of your will and purpose. Teach us to avoid rumour mongers. Teach us to continually remain chaste in the sanctity of our mind towards your calling. Amen!

Meditation: Eph. 4:1-16; Ezk. 20:33-38

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Knowing Your Pastor

*Surely the Lord Jehovah will do nothing, except he
reveal his secret unto his servants ... Amos 3:7*



When we do the right things as commanded by God, we become right-standing with Him, and we are covered with a garment of righteousness by the hosts of heaven. God reveals secrets to His faithful servants. The more these secrets are made known, the more one can find it easy and rewarding to follow the ways of the Lord. Also, hear what God said in Isaiah 42:9, "Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them." If there is anything that distinguishes Christians from adherents of other faiths, it is our ability to know and live with the heart of God. This was what established Jesus (Luke 2:40,52). Today we will learn how to build a relationship with the arm of the Lord on Earth, those He has called to carry on His work of restoration, so that all men shall be drawn unto Him. In simple terms, the servant of God in your midst is one who is the physical mouthpiece of God, who has been appointed to oversee a portion of the Lord's estate here on earth. The servant of God is already in the spiritual war front, and as long as he is surviving, you too will survive – it all depends on how you relate with the instructions the Lord is given to you through His servant. He has his reward with him, which you can benefit from if you follow him (Mat. 10:41). Often times people tend to compare pastors – this is not possible. The disciples of Jesus were people with varied characters. Peter was harsh, so was James

and John. Matthew was in their midst, but calm and he wrote the Gospel of Matthew. Philip was there, deeply spiritual. Thomas was there, with a doubting character. Luke was one of His disciples too, though not among the twelve, he was a successful medical doctor, who wrote the Gospel of Luke and Acts. We are all different but needed by the same God. The Lord leads you to a pastor that understands you, and have what it takes to help you to know Him more. People often want to know who is a genuine servant of God. There is no fake Servant of God; it is either one is a servant of God or a Servant of the Devil. If you listen well to the voice of God, you will know where He needs you to serve Him.

Faith confession: I understand now that the servant of God has a duty towards me, as he reveals the heart of God to me, in teaching and corrections. I will learn to follow him as he leads me to Christ. If I receive him wholeheartedly, my pastor can become a source of blessings to me.

Let us pray: Dear Lord! Help me to realise the impact that my pastor can make in my life. Help me to know the spiritual and physical blessings that I can receive through you from him. Amen!

Meditation: Mat. 10:40-42; 1 Cor. 9:11-12; 2 Tim. 2:6-7

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The Goodness in Good Friday

For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. Lev. 17:11



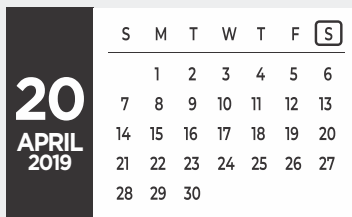
Christ died on Good Friday realising the blood of atonement, to give our flesh life and as atonement for our souls. This is the goodness in Good Friday. Many have argued that if Christ was going to resurrect, what was the need of crucifixion? First, it is important to understand some historical reasons why Christ needed to die for mankind to experience freedom from the power of death. As we study the scriptures, we come across facts that shows that God was dreadful (Daniel 9:4) to those who do not do His bidding. In Hosea 1:6, He said the house of Israel will not experience His mercy any longer. The point here is, if Israel that He called His firstborn (Exo. 4:22) was cast out of His presence because of their unbelief, is there hope of redemption for the Gentiles? Any one or nation ordained by God as a Firstborn, enjoys some special privileges from the Lord, because He makes them higher than the Kings of the Earth (Psa. 89:27). Meaning, they are empowered to rule the earth on behalf of God. Now, if God was rejecting the Israelites because of their evil ways, it equally means that he was stripping them of their peculiar authority over His creations. If we extend this to everyone living on Earth, it would mean that mankind was no where near the favour of God, as long as sin was commonplace – Rom. 3:23. God was in search of that faithful one whose

righteousness is able to attract His grace. The Bible said none was found – Rom. 3:10. God was tired of their animal sacrifices – Psa. 50:13. His anger was even more as people only worship Him with their mouth, but their heart was far away from Him – Psa. 50:16; Isa. 29:13. No one had the proper knowledge of God embedded in their hearts. But, something must be done – God provided the answer as explained in Romans 8:32, “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all...” Therefore, the goodness in the death of Jesus is seen in the redemptive power of God to salvage humanity from eternal destruction. The day calls for sober reflection. A day to reconnect our inner spirit to the goodness of God in the death of Christ, made manifest in the atoning blood of Christ.

Faith confession: Lord – your atonement on the cross of Calvary is my saving grace. Your blood has paved the way for me to be united with the purpose of God.

Let us pray: Lord, let the grace in your blood sanctify my heart. Let my conscience come alive whenever I sin against you. Purify my entire being in your blood. Amen!

Meditation: Romans 5:1-21;
Romans 6:1-23



Reflection on Redemption

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Ephesians 1:7



We said in our last devotional topic that the redemptive power of Christ came to be by His blood on the soil of Golgotha. Today, we shall be reflecting on what we have gained as children of the new covenant. We are connected to Jesus by our belief in the crucifixion. Hence, a supernatural bond has been created by a spiritual grafting, as indicated in John 15:1-2. It shows that our spirit being is being fed through Christ. Our natural-self have given way, in thoughts and action, to a life controlled by the spirit that raised Jesus Christ from the dead. It enables us to have the mind of Christ – 1 Cor. 2:16. With this mind of heaven in us, we are tuned to equally exhibit the character of heaven. Hence, we can say that we are admitted into the Kingdom of light by the blood of His crucifixion. We are able to please God in all we do, because our lives are no longer controlled by the imaginations of our hearts. As such, wickedness will not be found in us. The purifying, sanctifying and purging nature of the blood of Christ is able to create a new heart in us. It also renews the spirit of “service unto God” in us. Such that, we are willing to do what the Lord demands from us. We are sold out to His calling, and we are found wherever we are winning souls for the Kingdom. You will discover that the moment the blood of His atonement starts speaking on your behalf, the kingdom of darkness finds it difficult to afflict you with illness or

bring down your investments. As long as you do not give sensitive positions in your investment to those who are still slaves to the kingdom of darkness, you are bound to experience increase. What brought Solomon down were his idolatrous wives. You can see that those we associate with have a way of hindering our God-given grace and success. Our redemption is total, and it can make us become outstandingly prosperous – Mark 10:30, because we have control over the wealth of the land through the blood sacrifice at Golgotha. Therefore, our portion of the cursed land due to the sin of Adam, is now healed for us to experience exploits.

Faith confession: I know that the redemption of the Lord has enabled me to experience the riches of His grace. That, in the fulness of time, my entire life will be transformed to experience the life that is beyond human comprehension. Peace unto Peace and Grace unto Grace.

Let us pray: Lord! As I submit my life into your hands, let my joy increase. Sustain me in your unsearchable riches. Let me be clothed with honour and distinguish me with your glory. Amen!

Meditation: 1 Peter 1:1-13; Ephesians 1:1-23

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Why Easter?

*Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased of old;
the rod of thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed;
this mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt. Psa. 74:2*



Why critics have complained that the celebration of Easter was a pagan feast, it is important to note that we will be denying God control over the Earth if we begin to regard special days as belonging to occult or pagan worship. As Christians, we are to have dominion over the thoughts of society. So, if we agree that this day is for our Lord, so be it. This period of reflection has been named Easter, just as Adam named the animals, because we are in charge and it is sealed. To me, Easter is important, as we can use this period to reflect on our relationship with God. What will be your song, if you wake up one morning and discovered that you have been given a brand-new life – all your sicknesses and physical deformities are gone (Isa. 53:5), your debts have been paid (Mat. 18:32), you no longer fear the power of death (Heb. 2:14), and for the first time, you understand perfectly where you would go after you depart this Earth (Rom. 6:5)? This is the song this Easter presents to every sincere heart that values restoration. The anchor verse is a prayer unto God to remember those he redeemed in the Old Testament. Is it not right that we also have a time set apart to remind God of the redemption we have received in Christ at Calvary? So, you can see that this period is important to our salvation. It is a fact that humans, often times, forget the path that brought them to prosperity, while they often remember all those who

have done them wrong. We must appreciate the heart to live, as a gift of this heavenly Pentecost, so that we can appreciate God for giving us a new life in Christ. This again, is the spirit of Easter. In 1 Chron. 20:1-2, through the power of God in the anointing upon David, he was crowned with the same crown of the king who had oppressed Israel. This period is a period of overthrowing the powers that held our destiny in bondage, because Jesus has overcome the world (John 16:33). Easter celebration is entrance into freedom. Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father, as the restoration arm of God for mankind. We have now received the speaking voice of God by His spirit, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Faith confession: Jesus – Thank you for this Easter. It is a time for me to reassure myself of the salvation I have received from God through your sacrifice at Calvary.

Let us pray: Lord! Renew your steadfast spirit in me this period, that I may stand continually before your golden altar in heaven to worship you. Restore your mind in me and help me to always remember that you have set me free from all the troubles in the world. Amen!

Meditation: Rom. 4:25; 1 Pet. 1:3; John 11:25-26; 1 Cor. 6:14

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The Spirit of Resurrection

That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. 1 Peter 4:2



There is a responsibility of sanctity cast upon us from God by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. For everyone who is saved by the grace of God in Christ, there is need to realise that we have been admitted into a kingdom that does not tolerate sin. We shall not die now – but our remaining days on Earth must be lived to please God. It is a heavenly responsibility that we are found preaching the everlasting Gospel as this is the duty of the angels in heaven – Rev. 14:6. Any one not doing this onerous task of heaven can never be in the company of the elect and saints of God. Those who eat the testimonies of God and are unable to win souls through their testimonies will never be watched over by angels. The will of God is engraved into our heart the day we received our salvation through Christ. The will of God is a call for unity. His will is a demonstration of purity, holiness and righteousness. His mercy reflects His willingness to redeem. Yes – I believe that God is more willing to save and forgive our sins, than we are willing to repent. This is the spirit of resurrection. Just the way God promised Noah not to destroy the world again with flood in Genesis 9:15, after Noah had sacrificed unto God in Genesis 8:20, so also the death of Jesus Christ represents the everlasting sacrifice of peace upon humanity, until the day of judgement. If we look into the blessings that

Noah's sacrifice attracted from God in Genesis 9:1-17, we can also see that now that Jesus Christ is in heaven, we have better blessings to receive, provided we are ready to do the will of God. The rainbow was the sign of remembrance (Gen. 9:13-15) for Noah, so also the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a sign of remembrance in heaven and on earth, for us to keep enjoying the grace of God in Christ. All you need to do is to remind the devil that Christ resurrected for your sake, and that you can never be bound in his prison – never again. Your resurrection in Christ is sealed through the water baptism that you received. You are free, I am free – we are all free. Isn't this wonderful? Shalom!

Faith confession: Lord – Your resurrection gave me power to live. By your resurrection, the hope of men is rekindled for eternity. Your resurrection awakens the power to succeed in me.

Let us pray: Lord! I acknowledge that your resurrection breathed a new life into me. By which, I now exercise the power to experience abundant life. Help me to remain faithful in your will and to reflect the grace in your resurrection all the days of my life.

Meditation: Gal. 5:16-26; Heb. 6:1-6

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Gains of Congregational Fellowship

*Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord,
and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Isaiah 62:3*



The gathering of God's children cannot be complete until they fellowship together in one accord, lifting up Holy hands unto the King of kings. The Bible says that believers are like a crown unto the Lord – they are Royal Diadems (Isaiah 62:3). We are a holy people, and the redeemed of the Lord (Isaiah 62:12). Most times, believers just gather together without being aware that their gathering is primarily to host the Lord Jesus in their midst (Mat. 18:20). And, because of this ignorance on their own path, many believers fellowship with other brethren with divided intentions, thereby making the entire fellowship effort fruitless. In the book of Acts 2:1, we were informed that while they were there, at the upper room, fellowshiping together, they received the guest of honour from heaven, the Holy Ghost, and their entire life transformed. Why were they there in one accord? It is because they had built a relationship with one and another. This is the subject of our discussion. It is my prayer that at the end, you too will find the reason to be among the gathering of God's children in the vineyard where your works will be accounted for. One obvious reason why people don't build relationship with fellow believers is because they haven't understood the purpose of the Kingdom of God on earth yet. As such, many want to attend a gathering where their immediate physical needs are met, in neglect of their spiritual growth, without a Pastor to lift up a

standard for them (Isaiah 62:10). Since no pastor takes responsibility for their spiritual wellbeing, these sets of believers will eventually die and may still not find their way to heaven. When we gather together as one, united towards the will of God, we can really experience the favour of God. Hence, our gathering is called a solemn convocation of our souls, with the Lord and His angels in attendance. Our gathering encourages God to pour out His spirit upon us, so that we can experience increase and His miracles, to sanctify his name (Isaiah 32:15). This is how our prosperity is established from generation to generation. Hence, being in the midst the congregation can be an opportunity to receive answers to prayers.

Faith confession: I understand there is need to be in the midst of other believers, to become entranced in the atmosphere of praise and worship, and to hear the word from God's servant.

Let us pray: Lord! I understand that you take pleasure in the gathering of your saints. Help me to know the gathering of believers that you have approved, that I may worship you there. Lead me to the altar of your dwelling place, so that I can serve you to earn your eternal reward. Amen!

Meditation: Psa. 42: 1-11; Psa. 68:11; 1 Cor. 11:18; Prov. 6:16-19

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Leading the Younger Generation to God

Thus saith the Lord; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me.... Jeremiah 2:2



Youths must go after God now as seen in the anchor verse above, before it is late to do so (Eccl. 12:1). As we study scripture, we come across several portions of the Bible of the importance of Children in the Kingdom of God. A striking verse is found in, Mark 10:14-15 – “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.” In another portion of the Bible, Matthew 18:10, He says that children have angels who are always with God, interceding on their behalf. The role of children in building a virile kingdom for God here on earth cannot be overemphasised. We would also see this importance attached to children in Genesis 18:19 – “For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.” This is where we get the responsibilities of parents before God, and God expects that every child should obey his/her parents as these parents help them to know Him (Exodus 20:12). When a child is brought up in the fear of the Lord, the child will bring glory unto the name of the Lord – Matthew 5:16. And the evidence will show for all to see – the child will begin to grow into both spiritual

and physical maturity and finding favour with God and everyone (Luke 2:40,52). In Titus 2:3, the older women were admonished to train the younger ones. This is our duty before God as “elders in faith” – teaching children the truth about God, and making them to know Him, and having a personal relationship with God early in life. As this is done, the church and society will reap a multiplying effect of godly behaviours – humility, sanctity, respect, integrity and forthrightness. If this is done, all we are complaining about now, corruption, armed robbery, nonchalance attitudes among youths, etc, will become a thing of the past. Wickedness will definitely become a thing of the past (Psalms 37:1-2).

Faith confession: I understand the need of raising the younger generation for God. I will continually ask for wisdom to lead them to Christ.

Let us pray: Lord! Let the youth realise that your kindness and mercy is available to them. Help our youths to toe your path early in their lives, and arrest them with your Holy Spirit, so that they will live to serve you zealously all the days of their lives.

Meditation: Eccl. 11:9-10; 1 Tim. 4:12; Psa. 34:10; Psa. 37:25

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Doing Exploits in the Lord

*And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall
he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know
their God shall be strong, and do exploits. Daniel 11:32*



The anchor verse above says it all. You need prosperity? You need healing? You want announcement and establishment on every side? There is no short cut - you must know the Lord – Hosea 6:3. The anchor scripture above says that those who do not succeed in life are those who do not know their God. They are those who worship who they don't know - John 4:22. Exploits simply means a notable achievement in life. Something one is remembered for while alive or when he/she has departed this world. Sometime ago, while trying to find out how this can be, I came across another verse of the Bible – Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” And this strength from heaven will enable us to “Do all Things without murmurings and disputing” - Philippians 2:14. My thoughts shifted to Christ and what I have to gain from knowing Him, so that I can do all things without murmurings and quarrelling with both believers and unbelievers. Then I read in 1 Corinthians 1:24 – “Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” It was getting really interesting – Yes! I have got the nugget to success and exploits. I thought within myself. But one thing was going to stop me – guilt of my sins. While I was almost giving up, I came across Isaiah 1:18-19, “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the

Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.” Wow! – My heart gasped for joy. From here, I know that I can eat the good of the Land if only I can repent. I couldn't curtail my joy, but to equip myself more with the word of God. Just then, I came across Matthew 5:1-16, with all the assurance of success and exploits lying before me if I could accept Jesus as my Lord and Saviour. This is how I moved from a life of want to a life of abundance.

Faith confession: Lord – I am aware now that those who succeed and make exploits are those who know you and yield their heart to follow your precepts and do your bidding.

Let us pray: Oh Lord! Today, I pray that you guide my heart to follow you and to know you. Help me to invest the days you have given to me in serving you. I will continually rejoice in your service. May I not serve you in penury. My heart shall celebrate your glory in my life. Amen!

Meditation: Jeremiah 17:5-8; Hosea 4:6-7; Psalms 121:1-8

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Sustaining Our Supernatural Provisions

*Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them,
that ye may prosper in all that ye do. Deuteronomy 29:9*



It is possible to prosper in that we do as revealed in the anchor verse above. Supernatural provision is about receiving the power that will make every substance on earth to respond to your decrees (Job 22:28). It is true that after the sin of Adam, the earth and its fullness refused to yield their full substance to the exploits of man (Gen. 3:18-19). In Genesis 1:3, we are told that God took the earth forcefully from the powers of darkness that be, when He said – let there be light. The original condition of formlessness, void and darkness responded to God's decree of possibilities. This is why it is difficult for us to succeed except with the assistance of some spiritual forces. Some subscribe to the forces on earth which the Lord has kept under His control, and as such these sets of people are commanded by these forces from time to time to do things that will make God to cast them out of His sight. The powers on earth are in such a disagreement with one another that they have created what I would call, spiritual fluxes or instabilities. This is why once you are with the Lord, He will use His angels to calm these forces for you, and the evil forces of contention also known as the gates of Hell, will not stand to oppose your decrees. These fluxes are present in everything we eat, the air we breathe, the water we drink, even when we shake hands with people, and every interaction we have with any substance on earth. As such,

everything existing on earth is subjected to the power of God. For instance, the Bible recorded that the earth which was one body of mass, divided in Genesis 10:25, hence we have all the continents separated by mass of water and the disagreements, because of the curse upon Adam. Our possessions will fly away or degrade to a "no-value" status unless we keep them under the power that can purify and keep them. This is why we dedicate our children, houses, cars, our head, marriage and all in our lives to be sanctified by God, to invoke His control and protection. When we speak the word of God or give Him high praise, His power comes down to calm and still every shameful situation around us. This is how miracles happen and the secret behind the sustenance of wealth.

Faith confession: I understand that I need to stand and remain under the guidance of the Lord to experience supernatural provision, promotion and protection. Here, is my success hinged.

Let us pray: Oh Lord! I pray - sanctify all that you have provided for me. Let me keep experiencing promotion. Dear Lord, continually protect me with your Arm of glory. Amen!

Meditation: Psa. 127:1-2; Exo. 33:19; 1 Cor. 15:10; Gen. 22:17; Psa. 37:22; Prov. 23:5

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Angels as Spiritual Authorities

Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way; and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Exodus 23:20



Who are Angels? How relevant are they to our lives on Earth? We can answer these questions and more as we go into this discussion. Angels are created by God for His purpose. We can understand their duties when we are well acquainted with the reason why God created the Heavens and the Earth. For the purpose of this discussion, we will be treating the duties of Angels as they relate to this topic. In Matthew 4:11, we are told that angels came to minister to Jesus after He had defeated the devil. And while He was praying at the mountain of Gethsemane, an angel strengthened Him – Luke 22:43. If Jesus would need the help of angels, who are we not to subscribe to their ministry? Hence, Jesus says that for those championing the course of righteousness by confessing Him as Lord and saviour, He will recommend them for angelic favour – Luke 12:8. We have read several verses of the Bible about the duties of angels. What are these angels doing for God and for mankind? This devotional teaching gives insights into the duties of angels, how to attract them and how to make them help us. They are our helpers in time of need, and they present our prayers before the Lord – Rev. 8:3. They possess enormous strength and they are willing, when called upon to render assistance. But one thing is common with angels, their instructions must be obeyed to the later – Exo. 23:21. They are not

comfortable with people who doubts the power of God. If we see how the birth of Jesus was announced, we will also know that the angels can announce us for favour. They eat like humans, because Abraham and Lot fed them. They talk like humans, because people of old heard them speak their languages. This shows that they possess enormous intelligence, knowledge, understanding and wisdom. Many have eating with us, even in public places. They associate with humans, and they gather information about us too. They live among us – Psa. 34:7. Who are they? Where are they? Hence, Heb. 13:2 cautioned that we may have entertained angels by receiving strangers.

Faith confession: I understand that angels are spiritual authorities with the purpose of establishing the testimony of Christ in the world. I must work with them to get their help.

Let us pray: O Lord! Help me to appreciate the purpose of your angels around me. Send me angels in due season to help me to fulfil your will. Let holy your angels bear my name and burden upon their lips. Ignite your passion in me as it is in the heart of your angels. Amen!

Meditation: Psalms 68:1-18; Psalms 91:1-16

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The Purpose of Prophecy

*... have the testimony of Jesus: worship God:
for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Rev. 19:10*



Today, we have all manner of people claiming to be prophets of God, yet they do not have the testimony of Christ in their lips. How can someone be called a prophet of God, when the person has no evidence of being born again, and being born of water and of the spirit? If we understand the anchor verse position above, we will know that merely saying things that come to pass does not qualify one as a prophet of God, but when such revelations reveals the testimony of Jesus, as the only true son of God, by whom we are all restored to God. Prophecy is to reveal the released Rhema for the purpose of edifying the church. Prophets do not go after magical powers to ensnare people as the case with the evil prophetesses in Ezk. 13:18-19, who killed the innocent for the gifts of food they received from their evil-minded customers. Just like Balaam used enchantments until the spirit of God possessed him – Num. 24:1. The Bible says that where there is no vision the people perish (Proverbs 29:8). The spirit of the Lord creates the vision. Prophecy without vision is vain-talking. Vision without prophecy is spiritual dumbness. Both complements each other. There is no vision without a relationship with God. There is no relationship without receiving the word of God. There is no word of God without receiving Christ. The purpose of prophecy, as an instrument of the Lord's arm is to help us receive answers to our requests, so that we would be free from all spiritual

entanglements, that has made it difficult for us to do the will of God. The prophetic anointing comes with a message of abundance, care and restoration. Every gift of the Lord is wrapped and beautified in prophetic words. When we are ministered to prophetically, we feel the power of the Lord in and among us. When we worship prophetically, we are moved to yield our hearts to Him in total repentance unto conversion. We feel the love of the Lord when we are in His prophetic presence. When we dance under His prophetic anointing, we don't get tired and care who is watching – all we feel is praising the Lord. Are you willing to experience His prophetic presence today? You can, if we gather in one accord to praise Him, as a family or as a congregation – caught up in the glory of His holiness.

Faith confession: Lord - I am enveloped in your prophetic presence. I am willing to receive your prophetic anointing, so that when I make decrees, they shall be honoured in your name.

Let us pray: Lord! endow my spirit with your prophetic anointing. Touch my tongues with your prophetic unction. Help me to dance to the rhythm of your prophetic presence. Amen!

Meditation: 1 Corinthians 13:2-3;
Romans 12:6-19

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Receiving Prophetic Uncction

*... he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive
ye the Holy Ghost. John 20:22*



We receive the prophetic unction through the outpouring of the spirit of God upon all believers. I want us to know that the moment the Holy Spirit is poured down, we have experienced the breath of Jesus Christ. It is only by His breath does the Holy Spirit descend upon us. This is why some have said they experienced a cold breeze as the Holy Spirit descended upon them. Why? Jesus released the Holy Ghost – the life bearing spirit from His nostrils through the cloud (Luke 21:27). The cloud is cold, hence the breath from him is also cold. Jesus did not breathe upon them so that they will champion their own course, but the purpose of heaven. Anytime we experience the Holy Ghost in our gathering, we have experienced the visitation of our Lord, and we are set to prophesy. We will notice that our prayers are no more repetitions, but purely clouded in worship and praise, as we yearn for more of His indwelling. The book of Joel 2:28 says: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy ..." Why should the sons and daughters of Israel prophesy, if not to remind the Israelites of their wickedness towards God, and to preach the good tidings that the gospel of our lord Jesus Christ brings? The purpose of this is the basis of which all of us can speak prophetically and see our words come to pass. How does this happen? It is after receiving the Lord, who then sow into us

the seed of His presence. This seed will make it easy for us to be possessed with the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit comes into an environment, the Shekinah of the Lord will envelop all that is present there, and then the outpouring of the prophetic gift will happen. During this time, our souls sucks in the cloud of the Lord, until it envelops our minds and thoughts. This brings zeal into our heart as we receive the unction to prophesy. Saul prophesied in the midst of the prophets after receiving the anointing of the Lord– 1 Sam. 10:11. King David started writing prophetically as seen in the Psalms after he received the anointing too. The anointing of the Lord from the Order of Melchizedek induces prophetic unction upon us.

Faith confession: I understand that with the gift of prophecy I can speak mysterious tongues and act in mysterious ways beyond human imaginations. Once the spirit of prophecy possesses me, my tongue becomes a flaming fire that will be used by the Lord to restore dead situations to life.

Let us pray: Lord, release your prophetic unction upon me through your Holy Spirit. And, help me to use the gift in edifying your church, so that men will give you glory and praise. Amen!

Meditation: 1 John 2:20; 2 Peter 1:21; 2 Peter 2:1-3

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Becoming Converted in Christ

*But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not:
and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. Luke 22:32*



Conversion is the hallmark of our spiritual walk in Christ. This is what the world is lacking. Conversion is beyond coming to a church gathering to weep for our sins under the influence of the Holy Ghost. Conversion is living the life of Christ in Christ. You can see that from the anchor verse above, Christ was not expecting all of them to be converted at once, but that Peter should strengthen them after his own conversion. This is also the reason we have Pastors raised for us by the Lord. If the Pastor is converted, the congregation will seek conversion. But, when the Pastor is not, how can he preach and stay on the truth that brings conversion? Conversion releases the zeal in us to stand to defend the gospel at all times. The need for conversion is the reason Pastors should not dilute the word of God to amass riches. Conversion is highly dependent on how much knowledge of Christ we have. We are all saved, but not all of us are converted – this is truth. It is through conversion that the grains are separated from the chaff –those who eat meat from those who take milk – Heb. 5:12. So, we can say that our spiritual journey in Christ is a winnowing experience. Once anointed, we are ignited to deliver, and the burden of restoration comes alive in us as the spirit of life infuses our mind. Then, we want to restore; we want to preach; and we want to let the world know we have Jesus Christ speaking in us. In Matthew 10:8, Jesus

commanded His disciples to heal and cast out devils. Was there a special power He gave to them to achieve this bidding? It is important to note that we have both spiritual and physical afflictions. Those who are afflicted physically feels natural pains, but spiritual affliction is clouded in worries and illusion. When one is afflicted spiritually, one is aware that things are not really right or in order. This is the kind of affliction that is mentioned in Haggai 1:6 – working so hard with nothing to show. One is rich, yet illnesses and troubles eat up the riches -Eccl. 6:2. Conversion leads to total and permanent healing – spiritually and physically. See you in month of May. Until then, remain in the glory of His anointing.

Faith confession: I aim for the conversion of my soul and the refreshing of my spirit. I lean forward towards the salvation of my soul for eternity sake.

Let us pray: Dear God, help me to seek your inner conversion. Let me not preach your word to others in sin and iniquity. Lift my head in purity to behold your face continually. Save my spirit from becoming corrupt through evil communications. Amen!

Meditation: Psalms 51:1-13; Matt. 13:15; Matt. 18:3; Acts 3:19

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Covenant Confession

If you are not born again, you may have studied this devotional as literary material and will not receive the spirit therein. You can make a decision to correct that now by saying this covenant confession:

Lord Jesus, I know now that you died for my sins. I believe and confess you as my Lord and Saviour. Please come into my life and dwell inside me.

If you just said this confession, you should locate a spirit-filled church to join in fellowship with them – let the pastor know you just gave your life to Christ and you will be directed on what to do next. Salvation is a personal race and you must be serious with it.

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Thoja

Worship with us at



**Royal Diamonds
Int'l Church**

(Christ Movement)



Nnanta Close, Off Weli Street, Eneka Road, Rumunduru, PH



08086737791



info@christmovementinternational.org

WEDNESDAY

5:30PM

SUNDAY

8:30AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL

7:30AM

- A total transformation in the way you Think and Act
 - Understanding the basics of the Christian life
- How to Exist as sons of God
- How to Manifest the true Nature of God
- Total Freedom from satanic maneuvers
- How to make Heaven

About the Author

Pastor Oghenethoja Umuteme encountered God the day he was baptised at St Stephen's Anglican Church, Owhelegbo Delta State, when he received a warm feeling in his heart as he confessed the Lord Jesus as His lord and personal saviour. His birth was surrounded with mysteries – he was born to a mother who had been barren for eight years. There was hardly anything he said that did not come to pass as he was growing. In 1994 he had a dream in which he received an orange which contained a bible with a red cover. Events continued dramatically until he started hearing voices telling him to go for rescue, as many souls were heading for destruction. Then it became clear to him that he was being called to carry out the task of restoring mankind back to Jesus.

In January 2006, he heard a voice telling him to read Isaiah 42. On



reading to verse 6, he felt a deep force within him and started trembling and a voice said - 'I have called you.' As he read further

he was getting immersed in the spirit of God and when he read verse 22, the voice said, 'this is your task.' Then on the 13th of October 2008, he heard a voice while driving: 'Service starts in your house on Sunday.' Events happened that were beyond his understanding and on Sunday 19th October 2008, the first public worship service came to pass.

He is trained at Rivers State University, Nigeria; Robert Gordon University, UK; UNICAF University, Cyprus; Nations University, USA; and TGSAT, India; leading to academic degree certificates in engineering, organisational psychology, divinity and theology. He has over 11 years' work experience as an engineer, growing to the position of Engineering Design Lead in the oil and gas industry, and equally has a rich curriculum vitae that covers trainings and experiences in other works of life, such as human resources management, marketing management, legal studies, alternative dispute resolution, etc. Pastor Oghenethoja Umuteme is married to Pastor(Mrs.) Umuteme Adokiye Obele, who supports him in the call of God upon his life, and their marriage is blessed with children.